

**REACHING HIGHER
WITH IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF INDIANA
WORKING PAPER***

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Indiana Commission for Higher Education
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*This working paper is a supplement to the Commission's *Reaching Higher: Strategic Directions for Higher Education in Indiana* adopted in June 2007. The working paper was prepared to elicit further discussion and define action items for moving forward with strategic directions on Indiana's community college.

**A companion piece to this document has been developed by Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and is attached. Ivy Tech's document expands and builds upon the direction set forth in the Commission's *Reaching Higher with Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana Working Paper*.

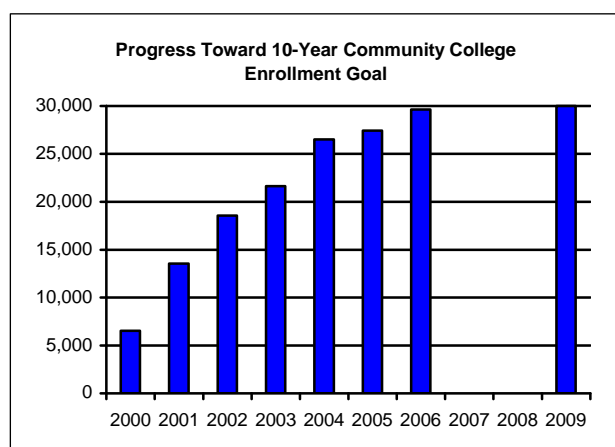
Reaching Higher with Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana

Brief Historical Perspective

Following World War II, Purdue University and Indiana University expanded regional extension sites throughout Indiana as an alternative to the community college approach that was sweeping the nation at the time. These extension sites predominately offered specific courses and associate degree programs. Over time, these extension sites were brought together to form full regional campuses with expanded degree programs at the baccalaureate level and limited master's degree programs.

In 1963, Ivy Tech was created to provide statewide technical and vocational training and be a low cost entry point into college for Indiana residents. Ivy Tech started with a very modest state appropriation and was to provide short term training needs in leased office and warehouse space. As such, the college had very few general education courses and no courses transferred to other Indiana colleges and universities until 1987.

In 1998, then Governor Frank O'Bannon asked the Commission for recommendations to improve the competitive quality of Indiana's workforce. A key finding was that Indiana substantially lagged the nation in the percentage of its adult population participating in higher education. A survey of states indicated that those with high adult college participation had strong community college systems. In an effort to broaden statewide community college offerings, Ivy Tech and Vincennes University were asked to partner in developing a community college system. Vincennes University was to contribute its decades of experience



with transfer of credit and the expertise they had developed in offering over 200 general education courses. Ivy Tech was to contribute their statewide geographical distribution and take responsibility for the day-to-day management.

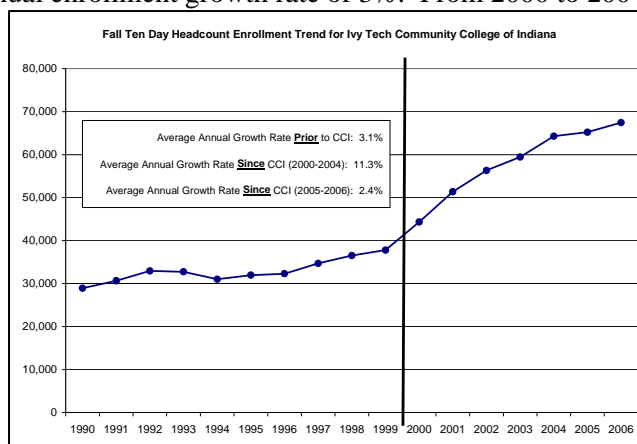
The Community College partnership was launched in late 1999 with a tuition freeze, emphasis on transfer of credit, and a statewide marketing campaign. Results were immediate with enrollment increasing by 30,000 students in six years, an increase of 78% of Ivy Tech's base enrollment. After five years, the partnership between Ivy Tech and Vincennes University fell apart and was dissolved resulting in a

decision to make Ivy Tech Indiana's community college. Legislation was passed in 2005, signed by Governor Mitch Daniels, designating Ivy Tech as the community college and renaming it Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana.

Enrollment

Even with the substantial enrollment increase of 30,000 students, the Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana only enrolls 33% of all students in the public sector as compared with approximately 45% nationwide. More importantly, Indiana's adult college participation rate, while improved, still ranks 37th nationally. Ivy Tech's penetration rate is substantially lower than some benchmark community colleges in the country. For example, Ivy Tech would need to double its enrollment to have the same penetration as Maricopa Community College, which serves Phoenix, Arizona.

Ivy Tech's enrollment growth over the past two years is of particular concern. Prior to the 1999 community college kick-off, Ivy Tech had an annual enrollment growth rate of 3%. From 2000 to 2004, this average annual rate grew to 11%. In 2005, there was an annual increase of 1% followed by a 2% increase in 2006. In some respects, it is not unusual to have a respite period after such a rapid enrollment growth period. However, if this represents a peak or loss of momentum, then the aspirations for the community college and Indiana may never be realized.



The initial kick-off of the 1999 statewide marketing campaign focused on branding the community college, the tuition freeze, the ability to transfer courses, and aggressive communication efforts. The branding efforts specifically targeted Ivy Tech as a comprehensive community college - not just a vocational training institute - an issue Ivy Tech had struggled with over the years even following a name change from Indiana Vocational Technical College to Ivy Tech State College. The advent of the Community College of Indiana created something new, something different. Along with this aggressive statewide marketing campaign, the image of a new community college with low tuition and the expanded offering of general education courses that transfer to the four-year universities contributed substantially to the enrollment growth. In fact, the growth in the general education courses also produced a rise in enrollments in the technical programs at a time when enrollments in technical programs had been declining nationally. At least part of this tremendous enrollment growth can be attributed to students recognizing Ivy Tech as a college not just a trade school.

Since the concept of a community college is still relatively new to most Hoosiers, Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana has a unique opportunity to further brand itself with the general public. Capitalizing on this opportunity will allow the Ivy Tech Community College to develop and present a new image to the public as well as provide innovative and creative ways of delivering education to a variety of student populations – education that can be attuned to Indiana's economic aspirations thus benefiting students in achieving successful employment in high demand, high wage careers.

Degree Completion

As with community colleges across the nation, Ivy Tech Community College shares the challenge of having low graduation rates. For full-time students seeking an associate degree, Ivy Tech's two-year graduation rate is 16% with a three-year graduation rate of 23%. After seven years, the graduation rates for full-time students increases to 33% (15% for part-time students over a seven year time period). While these rates are lower than the national average of 30% after three years, the national average should not be the aspiration.

Clearly there are challenges for community colleges. Community colleges are open enrollment and tend to attract and enroll students from the lower 50% of the high school class as well as older working adults. For Ivy Tech, approximately 70% of incoming students need remediation. Community college students frequently work and raise families while going to school. Additionally, some community college leaders attribute low graduation rates to students attending a community college for specific courses with no intent of completing a degree. Even so, a recent California community college study indicated that only 25% of full-time students who stated that they enrolled with the intention of earning a degree actually earned a degree three years later. In any respect, the community college graduation rate has a lot of upside potential.

One strategy could be to deliver program offerings/pathways specifically based on the enrollment status of the student. For example, a *college for working adults* is a model that has been successfully implemented at Indiana Wesleyan University and is now being piloted by Ivy Tech. This pathway is designed to have shorter course lengths (four weeks in lieu of sixteen weeks) and move students toward degree completion at a more deliberate and precise pace. The impact of Indiana Wesleyan University's program is demonstrated in graduation rates of approximately 64%.

A similar model could be considered for full-time students who have completed Indiana's Core 40 high school curriculum. For instance, full-time students could attend six to eight hours per day and earn an associate degree in a nine to twelve month period rather than the traditional two-year time frame. A class schedule that meets daily, five days per week, would resemble that of a work schedule or a fifth year of high school, provide more structure, and significantly decrease time-to-degree. Although students may continue to choose a pathway similar to the traditional approach currently in place, a limited set of recommended plans would provide greater opportunity for degree completion in a more timely way.

Another strategy could be the implementation of a mathematics course transformation project at Ivy Tech Community College. This project would focus on increasing the number of community college students, who complete – and master the content of – high enrollment, lower division, introductory math courses. Engaging all full-time faculty in the mathematics department, the project would optimize teaching methods, especially those employing technology, which can be applied consistently in all course sections. To encourage further educational options for students, courses would be drawn from the Core Transfer Library, which would guarantee transferability. The impact of the project could be maximized by including remedial math courses and key high school math courses, and by inviting four-year institutions to participate. Accountability measures would include success in subsequent coursework, especially in higher sequenced math courses and courses requiring strong math skills, including courses taken at four-year institutions. Although the primary objective of the project would be to enhance effectiveness, some measure of efficiency in the delivery of coursework might also be realized. Employing the services of the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) would significantly facilitate implementation of the project.

Remediation

Remediation is a problem at community colleges nationally as well as in Indiana. As much as 70% of community college students take at least one remedial course in math or English. There does not appear to be any compelling evidence that remediation improves the chances of success. In fact, a recent study conducted for Ivy Tech showed that only 14% of those needing English remediation had successfully moved on to, and passed, college-level English within two academic years. It also found that only 15% of those students needing math remediation successfully moved on to, and passed, college-level math within two academic years. Additionally, a study of the California Community College system demonstrated that the likelihood of a student attempting a college-level Math course after beginning in a remedial level math course is 10% (25% for students attempting a college-level English course after beginning a remedial English course).

Typically, incoming students take placement exams in English or math to determine which course(s) they should enroll when beginning their academic work at the community college. Although placement exams may measure academic abilities, they do not necessarily indicate or measure student motivation. At a community college, motivation may be a more significant indicator for success than academic preparation. Research indicates that students, otherwise identified through placement exams as unprepared or ineligible for credit-bearing college-level courses, were generally 70%-80% as successful in those courses as eligible students.

In line with the 2001 systematic reduction of remedial course offerings at the public-four year institutions, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education has recommended the elimination of all remedial courses at Indiana's public four-year colleges and universities by 2011. Since Ivy Tech Community College is less than half the cost of a four-year university, it is a more appropriate place for remedial work. However, there also is a recommendation to dramatically restructure the remedial course offerings at the community college. More than likely, students did not enroll at the community college with aspirations of being placed in remedial coursework – coursework in subjects that they may not be interested or may have experienced failure with in the past. A traditional approach to delivering such courses apparently was not successful in high school, thus it should not be of surprise that such approaches do not work in college.

The purpose of remediation at the community college should be to enable students to succeed and go on to degree completion. Remediation should be a stepping stone for college access and success, rather than the end of a journey. Ivy Tech Community College should be encouraged to develop new and creative approaches to serving students with remedial education needs. Such approaches may include, but are not limited to:

- Limiting the number of remedial courses a student takes to one remedial course per subject area. Students needing deeper levels of remediation ought to be referred to Indiana's adult basic education centers. Passport programs between the community colleges and the adult basic education centers could be developed in similar fashion to the programs that have been developed and implemented between the community colleges and the four-year universities.
- Allowing students to self-select whether or not to take a remedial course after taking a placement exam.
- Offering short four-week refresher courses (in lieu of a sixteen week course).
- Embedding more of the remedial math and English skills that most students need in the content of the regular college courses.
- Providing self-paced computer instruction in the remedial subject matter and/or individual and group tutoring sessions.

Paying for college

Community college tuition continues to rise. Over the past ten years, it has increased 46% from \$1,937 to \$2,819 per year. Indiana's community college tuition is still approximately \$100 to \$450 higher (depending upon the measurement) than the national average. Students attending community colleges are generally from lower income groups, and many of these first-time students decide to attend college late and as such miss the March 10th deadline for state financial aid. Since the majority of community college students attend on a part-time basis, they are ineligible for federal Pell grants unless they enroll in at least six credit hours. Indiana only allocates \$5 million (out of \$200 million) in state financial aid to support part-time students, and this aid is provided on a first come, first serve basis and is spread across all Indiana's public and independent two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

Additionally, many community college students are older and/or independent students. Unlike younger traditional-aged dependent students, these students no longer receive financial education assistance from their parents, and they may have additional financial challenges in respect to books and supplies, transportation, and in many instances, child care costs. Of all the higher education sectors, students at the community colleges are most affected by price increases, and cost can be a significant factor in whether or not they will attend college.

Several strategies could be employed to address the cost issue for community college students. For example, the state might institute a "tuition freeze" at the community college for successive years. This strategy would have the net effect of decreasing tuition in real terms by approximately 3.5% per year, with a significant reduction over a five to ten year period. Unfortunately, due to uncertainty in Indiana's fiscal

climate in recent years, legislators have been reluctant to make long term commitments to tuition freezes. The cost of a tuition freeze would be approximately \$4 million in the first year and an additional compounded \$4 million for each subsequent year.

Another strategy could be to provide more state financial aid to students attending the community college. Such a strategy would need careful consideration given the number of students that would need to be served. If available resources are spread too thin, it is unlikely to have any significant impact. Likewise, if available resources are too concentrated, questions of equity and fairness would be raised. In any event, a request to the General Assembly for financial aid specifically targeting community college students most likely would initiate requests by Indiana's four-year colleges and universities for similar treatment.

Until fairly recently, California offered a free community college education to its residents – today there is a modest cost of \$690 per year. Some states have recently put forth proposals for free community colleges for their residents. In Indiana, the current amount of community college tuition and fees paid minus state and college financial aid is approximately \$100 million per year. While this certainly is a large amount, it is not out-of-the-question that Indiana could afford providing its residents with a free community college education considering that it is one hundred million less than the cost of the recent full day kindergarten proposal. This initiative would represent approximately 1% of Indiana's total annual budget of more than \$10 billion annual (6% of Indiana's higher education budget of \$1.5 billion). If phased-in over a ten year period, the cost would be \$10 million per year compounded over ten years. As indicated earlier, there is an open question of whether or not the General Assembly, faced with other fiscal pressures, could sustain this commitment over time.

In addition to cost, the concept of a less expensive or free community college addresses another very significant concept. Increasingly business and industry have called for a more skilled workforce with higher levels of education. There is an overwhelming consensus that people will need at least an associate degree and preferably a baccalaureate degree if the nation is to remain competitive internationally. Other countries are rapidly approaching U.S. levels of education and some are even surpassing it. At one point in the nation's history, it was thought that an eighth grade education was sufficient. Today, a twelfth grade education is expected. It may be time to raise the expectations that all people should achieve at least an associate degree and preferably a baccalaureate degree. Currently, approximately one-third of Indiana's workforce meets this objective.

Another strategy has the potential of reducing affordability barriers while at the same time raising education expectations and aspirations of Indiana's recent high school graduates. This strategy could provide recent Hoosier high school graduates the opportunity to receive a free community college education if they successfully complete Core 40, enroll at the community college in the fall semester immediately following graduation, attend college on a full-time status, apply for state and federal financial aid, and complete a degree within one or two years. Another option could be to provide funds in the form of a tuition waiver combined with a state work study grant or internship program.

Transfer and Articulation

The mobility of students among campuses underscores the need for better transfer arrangements in Indiana. Eighteen percent or 6,903 of the undergraduate degree-seeking students, who began studying at an Indiana public campus in Fall 1990, transferred within six years to another public Indiana campus before completing a degree at the campus at which they started. National trends suggest that multi-campus attendance will grow significantly in our state. The federal government reports that by the 1990s, more than one-half of all undergraduates attended more than one institution (about one-third attended two institutions, and an astonishing 20 percent attended three or more institutions).

Shortly following the launch of the Community College of Indiana, the Commission for Higher Education initiated the Transfer Indiana initiative, which included the creation of the Statewide Transfer and Articulation Committee (STAC). STAC has successfully completed work to articulate three Associate of Arts (A.A.) and Associate of Science (A.S.) degree programs offered at the community colleges with the public four-year institutions on a statewide basis (with nine additional programs to be completed by October 2007). STAC also has developed a Core Transfer Library, which consists of 73 lower division undergraduates courses that transfer statewide.

While the transfer environment in Indiana has improved dramatically since 1999, challenges still remain. First, all Indiana's colleges and universities, but particularly Ivy Tech Community College, should maximize the courses that will apply to transfer students' degree objectives and ensure that transfer opportunities are transparent and widely available through the TransferIN system as well as in on-line and print copies of the schedule of courses. Additionally, to increase the success of the growing number of transfer students, any student who successfully completes general education core courses at one public campus should be able to transfer these general education core courses to any other public campus in the state. Successful agreements with the Core Transfer Library should serve as the groundwork for such an initiative.

Workforce Development

Governor Mitch Daniels' Strategic Skills Initiative (SSI) was developed to address Indiana's critical job shortages and to increase opportunities and wages for Hoosier workers. As a part of this initiative, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development identified the following key themes in its April 2006 report, *Root Causes of Occupational and Skills Shortages in Indiana*.

- Many in the labor force have insufficient academic preparation for occupations. There is a lack of education in the workforce especially in the areas of job specific skills and basic skills.
- A lack of awareness and information about career opportunities, avenues, and requirements for some occupations seems to exist.
- For some occupations, there is a lack of available training, qualified faculty, and clinical sites.
- The ability of this initiative to address state and federal regulatory issues that govern the qualifications and standards for occupations may be limited.
- Wages and benefits are a factor in determining the supply of workers for occupation. Wages and benefits can cause workers to change jobs or leave the area.
- New and changing technology will likely be root causes for future shortages. Rapid increases in technology have left workers ill-prepared to move into higher-skilled jobs.
- The current workforce is aging. Up to half the employees in some industries will retire in the next decade.
- Some root causes are more critical than others; some are more critical than others in the short term for quickly reducing gaps; and some are longer term or not as easily address.
- None of the root causes acts independently and none is the pure and sole cause of the shortage. Solving the root problem will not close the skill gap in every case. Secondary causes may remain after the root causes are solved.

The Department of Workforce Development has targeted funds towards solving some of these critical issues on a regional basis with Ivy Tech Community College being a critical partner in these efforts. To continue to address these issues and assist Ivy Tech Community College's focus on the development of the skill base of Indiana's current workforce, the Commission should work with the business community and the Department of Workforce Development and Ivy Tech Community College to identify strategies to address the current high-demand and future workforce needs of the state. This may include coordinating existing and potential state funding opportunities for training delivered by Ivy Tech Community College

and completed onsite at a business or industry as well as providing a financial incentive for Ivy Tech Community College to increase the number of third party certificates earned and independently certified by business and industry for consideration in the 2009-11 biennial budget.

Summary of Community College Recommendations

Recommendation 1: ICHE recommends that Ivy Tech Community College take the opportunity to **define, brand, and publicize** what a comprehensive community college can be for the state of Indiana.

Recommendation 2: ICHE recommends that Ivy Tech Community College **develop, deliver, and expand program offerings** through innovative models based on student characteristics.

- Expansion of the **college of working adults** to become the predominant mode of delivery for working adults.
- Consideration of a model for full-time **recent high school graduates** who would attend six to eight hours per day and **earn an associate degree in a nine to twelve month** period.
- Implementation of a **mathematics course transformation project** to increase the number students, who complete – and master the content of – high enrollment, lower division, introductory math courses.

Recommendation 3: ICHE recommends that Ivy Tech Community College be encouraged to develop new and creative approaches to serving students with **remedial education** needs.

- **Limiting the number of remedial courses** a student takes to one remedial course per subject area with students needing deeper levels of remediation being referred to the State's adult basic education centers. Nothing should preclude Ivy Tech Community College as acting as a point of contact for students requiring adult basic ed (or Ivy Tech Community College should act as the point of contact for students requiring adult basic education)
- Allowing students to **self-select** whether or not to take a remedial course after taking a placement exam.
- Offering **short four-week refresher courses** (in lieu of a sixteen week course).
- **Embedding** more of the remedial math and English skills that most students need in the content of the regular college courses.
- Providing **self-paced computer instruction** in the remedial subject matter and/or individual and group tutoring sessions.
- Serve as the primary **provider of high school credentialing for adult basic education** by expanding its services for GED certification and, within five years, develop a robust system of granting high school diplomas.

Recommendation 4: ICHE recommends that the State and Ivy Tech Community College ensure that the cost of attending a community college campus is as **affordable** as possible.

- Instituting a **"tuition freeze"** at the community college for successive years.
- Providing **more state financial aid** to students (including part-time students) attending the community college.
- Providing recent Hoosier high school graduates the opportunity to receive a **free community college education** if they successfully complete Core 40, enroll at the community college in the fall semester immediately following graduation, attend college on a full-time status, apply for state and federal financial aid, and complete a degree within one or two years.

- Implementing more flexible and transparent financial aid applications processes. For example, by extending the SSACI application deadline past March 10th of each academic year.
- Keeping the percentage of family income necessary to pay tuition and fees at Ivy Tech Community College at or below the national average.

Recommendation 5: ICHE recommends that all Indiana's colleges and universities, and particularly Ivy Tech Community College, maximize the courses that will apply to **transfer students' degree objectives** and ensure that transfer opportunities are transparent and widely available through the TransferIN system.

Recommendation 6: ICHE recommends working with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and Ivy Tech Community College to:

- Develop strategies to address the **current high-demand and future workforce needs** of the state.
- Coordinate existing and potential state funding opportunities for training delivered by Ivy Tech Community College and completed **onsite at a business or industry**.
- Provide a financial incentive for Ivy Tech Community College to **increase the number of third party certificates earned and independently certified by business and industry**.

Recommendation 7: ICHE recommends that, through its recommendation process for new academic buildings, Ivy Tech Community of College is encouraged to either: a) **build shared facilities** in partnership with a baccalaureate degree granting institution; or b) **co-locate new facilities** on or adjacent to the campus of a baccalaureate degree granting institution wherever possible.